



State of Vermont  
Agency of Human Services  
Office of the Secretary  
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Cynthia D. LaWare, Secretary

February 15, 2008

Community Partners and Agency of Human Services (AHS) District Staff:

During the past year, I have had the opportunity to meet with members of your communities and listen to your issues and concerns. One of the most significant and consistent concerns expressed in every community was the increase in homelessness and how difficult it is for many of our clients to find or maintain their housing. Based on this information I asked Cathy Voyer, Director of Housing for AHS, to work across the Agency to address this issue. In conjunction with Cathy, the agency-wide taskforce representatives have developed the AHS *HousingNow* initiative. Our goal is to alleviate homelessness, prevent the loss of housing, and deliver services to consumers through a holistic approach, which will enable them to maintain their housing and achieve self sufficiency with a strong emphasis on maximizing the effectiveness of existing community resources and supports. I am confident that together, with your help, we will succeed in achieving our goal.

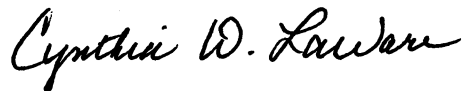
Combining a "housing first" approach with supportive housing services will enable individuals and families to break the cycle of homelessness. This process, led by District Field Directors, will facilitate collaboration among community service providers, housing suppliers, state agencies, and those in crisis. Our next *HousingNow* community meeting will be held on **March 10, 2008 from 10:00 to noon, at the Aldrich Library, Milne Community Room in Barre.**

We believe it is very important for all of our community partners to actively participate in this effort. With increasing need and limited resources, the *HousingNow* initiative must place great emphasis on maximizing the effectiveness of our resources. Together we must think creatively and collaborate effectively within our communities to transform the way we deliver services to some of our most vulnerable clients.

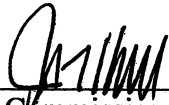
Please do your best to attend the meeting on **March 10, 2008**, and RSVP to **Cindy Miller at 479-4406 or [cindy.miller@ahs.state.vt.us](mailto:cindy.miller@ahs.state.vt.us)** - thank you for letting us know if you require accommodations no later than **February 29, 2008**.

We look forward to working closely with you and other community providers to focus our collective resources on effectively addressing the root causes of homelessness.

Sincerely,



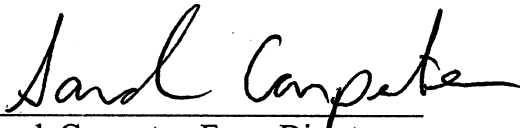
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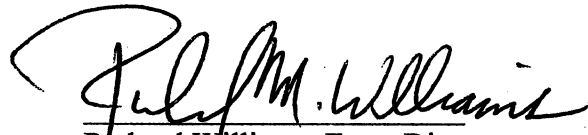
John Hall, Commissioner  
Department of Housing and  
Community Affairs



Gus Seelig, Exec. Director  
VT Housing and  
Conservation Board



Sarah Carpenter, Exec. Director  
VT Housing and Finance Agency



Richard Williams, Exec. Director  
VT State Housing Authority